

From: Brian McBride <brianmcb@outlook.com>
To: "jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us" <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 08/01/2022 09:47 AM
Subject: Hill's Hill Input

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Hello Mr. Connelly,

I want to provide some citizen input for the upcoming Hill's Hill Mountain Bike meeting.

I bring some experience here as the father of a teen mountain-biker, the founder of a kids hiking group, and a member of the town Open Space Committee.

I've attached a few slides that I hope are useful.

My conclusion is:

* I believe the Town can serve **BOTH** the needs of mountain bikers and support recovering wooded habitat, with four actions

1. Relocate pump track out of woods
2. Design and fund trails with habitat restoration, plantings, erosion measures
3. Enlist school, community groups to contribute, elevate, and support the project (Mtn Bike, Invasives, APS, etc)
4. Include passive recreation eco-signage, walking, educational rest spots

Thanks to you and the Parks and Recreation Commission the the good work you do for the Town! I look forward to hearing more on the project.

Brian McBride
36 Eastern Ave, Arlington MA 02476
m 617-645-8729
brianmcb@outlook.com

Attachments:

File: [Hills Hill Future - July 2022.pdf](#)

Size: 1400k

Content Type: application/pdf

From: betty trembly <edandbetty86@yahoo.com>
To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 08/02/2022 11:32 AM
Subject: Hill's Hill

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Hello Mr. Connelly,

I strongly urge the Parks and Recreation Department to build a pump track for mountain bikers at the base of Hill's Hill. There is an area at the base of the hill that is near the entrance from the Minuteman Bike Path, is level, and would not interfere with the playing fields. That would be a good site for a pump track. Mountain bike trails on the perimeter of Hill's Hill would be acceptable. Thus, the oaks and native plants at the top of Hill's Hill would not be disturbed, and could remain as a site for birdwatchers and walkers.

Thank you for your consideration of this alternate proposal.

Betty Trembly
76 Wright St.
Arlington MA

From: Daniel Leonard <leonarddaniel@hotmail.com>
To: "jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us" <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 08/02/2022 11:03 AM
Subject: Hill's Hill Mnt Bike Trails

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Hi Mr. Connelly,

My name is Dan Leonard, I am a lifelong Arlington resident. I'm writing to voice my support for the proposed mountain biking trails at Hill's Hill. I would have loved something like that when I was a kid growing up near Stratton School. And I'd love it for my kids who are now at the Brackett. I hope it moves forward. I'd even be happy to help in the planning/design as someone who has been mountain biking for many years.

Thank you for your support!

Sincerely,
Dan

From: Gayle Namchuk <gaylenamchuk@gmail.com>
To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 08/02/2022 10:00 AM
Subject: Hills Hill Mountain bike track proposal

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Hi Director Connelly,

Just a quick note: while I think a mountain bike track at Hills Hill / the Veteran's Memorial recreation complex is a good compromise for the kids looking for mountain biking space in town, I am very concerned about the proposed pump track. I support re-locating such a structure off the top of the hill for a couple of reasons:

1. Currently it is a pedestrian walk/cut through for that space, as well as a dog walking area, which does not naturally re-locate well. (for those avoiding the traffic on the bikeway, it is a pleasant place to walk)
2. a pump track at the top of a hill will contribute to erosion and ecological degradation which can be avoided simply by locating off the hill / at the base of the hill. Or better yet, re-located to an entirely different site that does not require extensive levelling or removal of tree canopy.

Generally speaking, I think a mountain bike trail in that space could be designed to have low ecological impact. If well designed with a commitment to ecological preservation of the current forest, it would be a great addition to the recreational resources for our youth in town. I hope tonight's meeting is productive, and there is serious consideration to change the current proposal. (not sure I will be able to attend). I have seen some discussion on NextDoor and also attended one of the ArMI sponsored walks through of the site. I believe a better compromise project can and should be undertaken.

Sincerely,

Gayle Namchuk

64 Wright St, Arlington

From: Jake Ebstein <jacob.ebstein@gmail.com>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 08/02/2022 10:17 AM
Subject: Support for Hills Hill Mountain Bike Project

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Joe,

My name is Jake Ebstein and I live in Arlington with my wife Hannah. I'm writing to voice my support for the mountain bike project at Hills Hill!

I'm an avid mountain biker who started riding when I was 10 years old. I wish the town I grew up in had a mountain bike park like the one being proposed for Arlington. I think it would be a great addition to Arlington and I hope the project will move forward. I would be happy to help in any way I can!

Thank you,
Jake Ebstein

From: Kerry Abukhalaf <kerrydance@gmail.com>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 08/02/2022 10:25 AM
Subject: Support for Hills Hill Mountain Biking

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Hello,

I'm just writing to express my support for the Mountain Biking Trails and Mountain Biking Park being considered for the Hills Hill area in Arlington.

As a parent of an Arlington teen, I see a need for shared recreation spaces that are appropriate for teens. Our youth need more outdoor activities and opportunities for exercise and social interaction. A mountain biking park is a great choice!

I wholeheartedly support this idea, and encourage you to move forward.

Regards,

Kerry Abukhalaf
10 Ridge St, Arlington, MA 02474
C. 510.205.9856

From: Danuta Forbes <danutaf17@gmail.com>
To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>, scanniff@town.arlington.ma.us, Jen Rothenberg <jrothenberg@arlington.k12.ma.us>
Date: 08/02/2022 09:50 AM
Subject: Mountain biking project

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Hi Joe, Shirley, and Jen!

I'm heading out on vacation, so I won't be able to attend tonight's meeting, but I wanted to let you know that I am in support of the mounting biking project at Hill's Hill. We have a HUGE mental health crisis, compounded by the pandemic and kids' addicted to their phones and on devices all day at school. Whatever gets kids outside in nature and keeping in shape, busy, not getting into trouble should really be our focus. AHS sports are very competitive, a huge time commitment, and not for everyone. It's five days a week, and that really doesn't work for a lot of kids who are in clubs, working on their academics, and doing other volunteer work. The more opportunities we give kids to participate in the sport that works for them is a win all around. This is such a great idea, I'm sure you all can find a way to please both sides, to come up with a plan for a biking trail that will attract people to this town, to spend money in our restaurants, stores, and highlight the innovation and priority on health that Arlington residents would like. I hope this project gets approved, and I look forward to hearing about a positive resolution to this situation.

Thanks,

Danuta
Former Town Meeting member, Precinct 10
AHS parent

From: C Wagner <cawagner@hotmail.com>
To: "jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us" <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 08/02/2022 09:53 AM
Subject: Please don't allow development of Hill's Hill

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Dear Director Connelly:

I'm writing to regarding the proposed development of Hill's Hill into a mountain bike and outdoor trails area.

I'm not against a project that would allow limited bike and walking trails, such as are featured in the Middlesex Fells and at Whipple Hill, if it won't remove trees, but I question how we could put something in that essentially permanently (for the live of most Arlington people) would wreck one of our very few semi wild open spaces - so as long as the project will not remove the tree canopy, it seems not terrible to me. On top of this, we have a budget crisis (about \$5 million a year, after the ARPA funds expire) in Town. Please don't spend a lot of money to ask if a project that destroys our open space trees and tree canopy is a good idea. Please don't spend money to do such a project either.

Please enter my correspondence into the record on this matter.

Thanks,
Carl Wagner
Edgehill Road
(Town Meeting Member, Precinct 15 and, also, mountain biker)

**Town of Arlington, MA**

July 20 at 10:02 AM · 🌐

Aug. 2, 6PM #ArlingtonMA Park and Recreation Commission to hold a 2nd public input meeting with the project designer, Powder Horn Trail Companies, to review the draft feasibility study and solicit design input. <https://loom.ly/xUMDRUw>

From: Nancy <nfonteno@gmail.com>
To: Joe Connelly <JConnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 08/01/2022 03:39 PM
Subject: Hills Hill Mountain Biking Proposal

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Dear Mr. Connelly,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the proposed mountain bike trails and pump track at Hills Hill in Arlington.

As a local resident, and parent to two young, active boys, I frequently lament the lack of local destinations appealing to tweens and teens in Arlington. I look back fondly on my own childhood, growing up in a town similar to this one, where we had the freedom to explore our surroundings and gather in public to socialize with other kids our age. There may no longer be arcades or roller rinks but this proposal provides us with an opportunity to provide a destination for local adolescents to gather to enjoy much needed healthy physical activity and fresh air, while offering them a chance to challenge themselves, learn new skills, and make new friends.

Not only do I believe that this proposal could improve the mental and physical health of our teen population, as well as other members of our own community, but because of its location, I think this addition to the town's recreational assets could potentially encourage non-residents from nearby towns to stop and spend some time and money here in Arlington. It would be a wonderful added benefit to our town.

For all of these reasons, I do hope that the proposal is approved and implemented as soon as possible.

Thank you,
Nancy Fontenot

From: Caitlin Sweeney <caitlin.sweeney@gmail.com>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 08/01/2022 03:40 PM
Subject: Mountain bike trail

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Hello!

I can't attend tomorrow's recreation dept meeting, but I'm just chiming in with my support for the proposed mountain bike course at Hill's Hill woods.

Thank you!

Caitlin Sweeney
Principal, C Sweeney Design
www.csweeneydesign.com

From: Gareth <glerwill@gmail.com>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 08/01/2022 03:42 PM
Subject: Hills Hill

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Dear Mr Connolly,

As a long time Arlington resident I am writing to support the eco track proposed for Hills Hill. The more extreme proposal will create excess erosion and degradation of this wonderful natural resource in Arlington.

Thank you,
Gareth Lerwill

From: Karen Carrasquillo <kcarrasquillo@bostonlight.org>
To: "jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us" <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 08/01/2022 04:05 PM
Subject: In support of Mountain Bike Trails

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Just writing to inform the town and organization of my support to the proposed mountain bike trail to the Recreation Lands in Hills Hill.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Karen Carrasquillo and Carlos Bosques
198 Overlook Rd

From: "Dave H. Crusoe" <dhcrusoe@gmail.com>
To: "jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us" <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 08/01/2022 07:35 PM
Subject: Support for the Hills Hill mtn bike & pump track

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Greetings,

I'm writing in support of the Hills' Hill mountain bike + pump track & skills area. My son and I are avid bikers, and often head to Allson to use the facilities near Harvard Square, as do our neighbors. I strongly support this kind of initiative and effort here in Arlington, as it adds to the opportunities for young people (and adults!) in our community.

Knowing that it's replacing current green space, I'd simply advocate for as much existing green space to be preserved as possible; that is, an architect may be able to both create 'new use,' and safely retain some of the natural environment, as well.

Thanks so much,
--Dave

Dave Crusoe
<https://bitculture.org>
pronouns: he/him/his

From: Naomi Bailis <naomibailis@gmail.com>
To: "jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us" <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: Jennifer Hruska <jenniferhruska2@gmail.com>
Date: 08/01/2022 08:43 PM
Subject: Hill's Hill project commentary

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Hello Joe.

We are writing to you with a high level of concern about the current proposal to build a mountain bike park in Hill's Hill. My wife, Jennifer Hruska and I are direct abutters to Hill's Hill and will be very directly affected by the proposed mountain bike park. We will be at the second public meeting tomorrow evening. To our chagrin, we did not receive notice of the first feasibility/public meeting that was held on September 23rd, 2021.

Hill's Hill is currently a recovering ecosystem filled with native plants (blackberry patch, sumac stands, sedge grasses, big tooth aspen) with indications of a return to the original oak-hickory forest. Contrast this with the Minuteman Bikepath, where invasive plant species abound.

We do not support the current proposal which would turn Hill's Hill into a likely crowded, deforested recreational site that would be directly adjacent to our home. We do not support building a Pump Track nor a Hub plus Skills Zone within the woods of Hill's Hill. The current option would disrupt and likely end the recovery of the Hill's Hill woods. Instead, we support an Eco-Track option. An Eco-Track option would entail a dual use approach. The Pump Track would be located outside the woods, there would be low impact permanent bike trails and the woods would be restored through community projects, education and habitat protection. The innovative Eco-Track option will provide biker trails and also conserve remaining wooded spaces. It is a both/and proposal that recognizes the importance of wooded spaces and the need for community engagement and recreation.

We look forward to the meeting tomorrow evening.

Respectfully yours,

Naomi Bailis and Jennifer Hruska

From: HEATHER HILL <heather_hill@me.com>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 08/01/2022 10:24 PM
Subject: Mountain biking!

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Dear Mr. Connolly,

Count us in on the mountain bike park. We have two teenage boys who love the sport, and are thrilled that Arlington is considering converting the woods near Hills Hill to trails.

Many thanks,
Heather Hill

Sent from my iPhone

From: Evelyn Ginsparg <eginsparg@gmail.com>
To: "friends-of-the-crusher-lot-members@googlegroups.com" <friends-of-the-crusher-lot-members@googlegroups.com>
Date: 08/01/2022 10:29 PM
Subject: [Friends of the Crusher Lot] Hill's Hill meeting tomorrow, plus brochure

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The 2nd public input meeting (on Zoom) about the mountain biking park designed for Hill's Hill is tomorrow (Tuesday) at 6pm. A more detailed plan will be presented. Sign up here if interested:

<https://www.arlingtonma.gov/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/30162/3757?backlist=%2ftown-governance%2fboards-and-committees%2fpark-recreation-commission>

Also, Arlington residents who are interested in preserving the natural areas in Hill's Hill with respect to the mountain biking park have put together a brochure detailing their thoughts and I've attached it here.

--

You received this message because you are subscribed to the Google Groups "Friends of the Crusher Lot Members" group.

To unsubscribe from this group and stop receiving emails from it, send an email to friends-of-the-crusher-lot-members+unsubscribe@googlegroups.com.

To view this discussion on the web visit

<https://groups.google.com/d/msgid/friends-of-the-crusher-lot-members/295436c9-2e3b-ab7b-699d-77c9815379bc%40gmail.com>.

Attachments:

File: [Eco Track Hills Hill July 2022-1.pdf](#)

Size:
2772k

Content Type:
application/pdf

From: Eric Cronin <eric.cronin@gmail.com>
To: "jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us" <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 08/01/2022 10:34 PM
Subject: Public Comment - Hills Hill Mountain Bike Park

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Hi. Below is a public comment for the Hills Hill Mountain Bike Park of which I am enthusiastically in favor of coming to Arlington.

I first became aware of a potential mountain bike park in Arlington when Henry Fenollosa started up a [Change.org](https://change.org) petition to create mountain bike trails and features in the Crusher Lot. As someone who lives nearby I was really excited at this awesome idea for an underutilized piece of land and also really impressed with the teenager who was pushing the idea forward. I then came across a "Friends of the Crusher Lot Woodland" website filled with cynical NIMBY arguments against the idea. The website stated concerns with increased traffic, crime, safety, noise and a decrease in property values. It culminated in the all too familiar claim that the "friends" are "not opposed to a mountain bike park in Arlington" but that the Crusher Lot is the "wrong location."

No matter where Arlington proposes to develop mountain bike trails and features in town, it will be the "wrong location" to a small vocal group of residents who claim that they are "not opposed to a mountain bike park in Arlington." Opponents elevate the preservation of "passive use" of town-owned land - always described in hushed tones usually reserved for Thoreau's Walden - above any other use when in reality, the "passive use" really means "little to no use." This is especially true when describing the use of these locations by Arlington youth. When we overvalue the "passive use" of public land, we discourage the use of those spaces by youth largely uninterested in using those spaces for nature walks, quiet reflection, casual strolling or the removal of invasive plants.

We owe more to our children and our community than the cynicism that fuels these arguments. There are a variety of public spaces in town where adults can engage in the type of activities that "passive use" advocates want to preserve. However, there is nothing in town similar to what is being proposed for development at Hills Hill. We should be encouraging and supporting physical activities for our community that keep us active and in good health. We should also be supporting initiatives and development in Arlington that are "fun" that some residents try to scare away with claims

of "noise", "safety" and the ever present "but my property value!"

Hills Hill is an excellent location for the development of mountain bike trails and features. My family would be enthusiastic users of the trails and bike features at Hills Hill. It is one of the most exciting and unique development ideas that Arlington has discussed in recent years.

Thanks,

Eric Cronin

From: Brenda <brenda.lovette@gmail.com>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 08/02/2022 06:31 AM
Subject: Hills Hill rec area

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Hello!

I just learned of the proposed Hills Hill trails project. I understand there is a zoom meeting tonight to hear more info, but I can't make it. I'd like access to a recording if possible. I think this sounds like a great addition to the Arlington resources and would use it myself for walking trails, and fully support the mountain bike features. I'm so pleased that Arlington continues to work to meet the needs of its community.

Thanks!

Brenda

Sent from my iPhone

From: Dana Shkolny <dshkolny@gmail.com>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 08/02/2022 07:43 AM
Subject: Please support eco-track for dual use

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Hello. I live right across from the rink on forest st and support the dual use for this land. Please support this dual use proposal.

Thank you

Dana Shkolny 781-632-4067

Sent from my iPhone

From: lah-rah veevy <veewoolfie@yahoo.com>
To: "jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us" <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 08/02/2022 08:38 AM
Subject: Eco-Track: Voicing my support!

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Hello Mr Connelly----

I am writing to express my support for the Hill's Hill Eco-Track plan (as opposed to the current proposal). The Eco-track meets *both* conservation and bike recreational goals.

As a 9+ year resident of Arlington and a homeowner, I am seeing habitat loss more and more recently in Town, and feel strongly that the Eco-track plan for this area is low-impact, habitat-friendly, and a better plan than the current proposal. Additionally, woodlands would be restored through educational projects and the environmental impact would be lessened with the Eco-track plan.

Sincerely, Laura Vivenzio

From: Richard A Goldberg <rag@ragmedia.com>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 08/02/2022 08:40 AM
Subject: Support Eco Track for Hill's Hill

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Dear Mr. Connelly:

In view of Arlington's very limited open space, I support the Eco-Track solution to satisfy the crucial environmental mandate to preserve what's left of our natural landscape while supplying the need for kids and adults to be able to enjoy and utilize the site. I urge you to support Eco-Track as a win-win.

Regards,

Richard A Goldberg
RAGvr
15 Cliff ST
Arlington MA 02476

Cell: 781.258.7079
www: ragvr.com

From: Erin Lawler <powers.lawler@gmail.com>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 08/01/2022 06:19 PM
Subject: Hills Hill

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Just writing in to say we'd love a pump track and all the mountain biking items proposed for Hillls Hill! Our family members, rangin from age 6-45, would really love it!!

Erin Lawler
Appleton St

Sent from my iPhone

From: dianemcken@aol.com
To: "jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us" <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 08/01/2022 05:18 PM
Subject: "Eco-Track" for Dual Use

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Dear Mr. Connelly:

As a home owner in Arlington and a Summer Street resident, I strongly support the Eco-Path enhancement of the mountain bike proposal so that both conservation and recreation are served for the Hill's Hill Woods.

Thank you,
Diane McKenzie

From: Zoe Cronin <zoe.cronin@gmail.com>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 08/01/2022 05:54 PM
Subject: Hills Hill Pump track - yes!

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Hi Mr Connelly

I am writing to support the mountain bike pump track at Hill's Hill. I am an Arlington resident in my 40s and I'd love to use it. My kid, age 9, would also love to ride there. It would be an amazing resource in town and so fun. It's a good use of the woods near Hill's Hill which right now are not used for anything (except coyotes). We would use a pump track a lot and are really looking forward to it. Currently the nearest place to go is in Chelmsford.

Thank you
Zoe Cronin
121 Mt Vernon St
Arlington MA 02476
617-959-1480

From: Zoe Cronin <zoe.cronin@gmail.com>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 08/01/2022 05:54 PM
Subject: Hills Hill Pump track - yes!

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Hi Mr Connelly

I am writing to support the mountain bike pump track at Hill's Hill. I am an Arlington resident in my 40s and I'd love to use it. My kid, age 9, would also love to ride there. It would be an amazing resource in town and so fun. It's a good use of the woods near Hill's Hill which right now are not used for anything (except coyotes). We would use a pump track a lot and are really looking forward to it. Currently the nearest place to go is in Chelmsford.

Thank you
Zoe Cronin
121 Mt Vernon St
Arlington MA 02476
617-959-1480

From: GM <gm.hakim@gmail.com>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 08/01/2022 04:45 PM
Subject: Hill's Hill Mountain Bike Paths - a Great Idea!

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Mr. Connelly,

Since I cannot attend tomorrow night's meeting, I want to write to show my support for the construction of mountain bike trails in the Hill's Hill area of Arlington. This would provide a great outlet for teenagers and adults in the area to get outside, socialize, and practice their skills without having to drive far out west to Lincoln or Carlisle. The reality for many high schoolers is that they need a productive place to spend time, and without that, they gather on children's playgrounds. You no doubt have seen the public posts on The Arlington List on Facebook about broken glass on playgrounds, loud teenagers outside people's houses, and more. This is just who teenagers are - we aren't going to change a developmental stage of life. Giving them a productive, structured environment to spend their time in would be a great idea for Arlington (it would also give them their own space, so they are not intruding as much into the space of families with small children. Please consider approving this proposal.

~George Michael Hakim
18 Edith Street
Arlington, MA 02474

From: Evan Hecker <evan.hecker@gmail.com>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 08/01/2022 04:53 PM
Subject: MTB at Hills Hill

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Dear Mr. Connelly,

I was pleased to see the proposal for the mountain bike features at Hills Hill and wish to communicate my support for this. My children are just getting into mountain biking, and have said a few times that they wish there were trails closer to us. I cannot wait for the day when they can go with their friends, and do not need me to drive them to the Fells or Beaver Brook. I am thrilled to live in a town so open to improvements and willing to change with the needs of its community. I am fully supportive of this effort and while I cannot attend the public input meeting, hope you consider this.

Thank you,
Evan

Sent from my iPad



Hill's Hill Project, 2022

Thoughts on a balanced future

Background - Key Opportunities at Hill's Hill

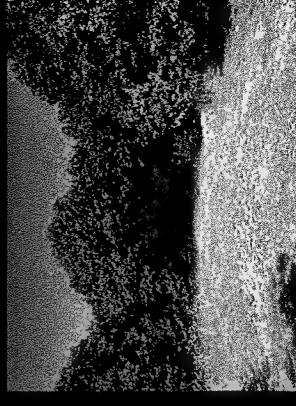
Recreation

- Good fit for mountain biking
- Free lance paths already in place
- Located near bike path and parking
- Varied terrain
- Strong interest by mountain bike club



Conservation

- One of few wooded spaces left in town
- Habitat is recovering w native species
- Supports wildlife, trees, walkers
- Opportunity for collaborative restoration
- Opportunity for youth education, action



Current Task Force Proposal - not yet balanced

- Focused mountain biking use
- Habitat not considered
- Non-bike recreation needs greater inclusion
- Proposed Pump Track location very disruptive to woods habitat

<https://www.arlingtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/58484/637707560346930000>



The Solution:

“ ...not Or”

Conservation

Recreation

Four steps BOTH conservation AND recreation goals:

1. Relocate pump track out of woods
2. Design and fund trails with habitat restoration, plantings, erosion measures
3. Enlist school, community groups to contribute and elevate and support project (Mtn Bike, Invasives, APS, etc)
4. Include passive recreation eco-signage, walking, rest spots

Innovative “Eco-Track” approach!

From: Beth Melofchik <lzicka784@gmail.com>
To: Bob Sprague <sprague.bob@gmail.com>, ArlingtonList <arlington@arlingtonlist.org>
Cc: Arlington Tree Committee <arltreecmte@gmail.com>, ecrowder@communication-exchange.com
Bcc: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 08/01/2022 08:31 AM
Subject: Re: [arlington] [Local news] Hill's Hill in the news

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Hill's Hill, more aptly Hill's Forest: where several types of oak, hickory, aspen, black cherry trees and sumac, all natives grow. Come visit this parcel of undeveloped wildness in Arlington. Some consider this part of Arlington's informal Mill Brook Linear Park, like a green ribbon running from Arlington Great Meadows, Reservoir, Hurd Field, Hill's Hill, Wellington Park and on along the bike trail and Mill Brook to Cookes Hollow and on to Meadowbrook Park. Elaine Crowder and her team of volunteers in ArMI, Arlington Invasives, have been tending to Hill's Forest for 2 years removing black swallowwort to allow the native trees to rebound and flourish: [Arlington, MA Invasives "ArMI" Army - iNaturalist](#).
[NewsItz Hill's Hill Newsletter - Google Docs](#)

Who owns Arlington's green spaces? Who gets to decide whether one is repurposed? What value does a forest have? A grove of native trees? How do such parcels protect community health during climate emergency? Do they offer counter balance during extreme weather events tempering flooding? Do we need them? Who is their voice?

Please come tonight take the stroll at Hills Hill and Zoom in Tuesday for the Parks & Rec meeting.

Cherish our green spaces, protect and defend them. Some recreation is passive with no less and maybe more value than organized sport. Passive recreation is in harmony with nature. Help protect it. Value it.

Click on the YourArlington link below for more info.

Who owns the green spaces? Who decides?

Please prevent hilltop removal amidst this native oak forest.

Beth Melofchik

On Sun, Jul 31, 2022 at 8:52 AM Bob Sprague <sprague.bob@gmail.com> wrote:
The Park and Recreation Commission plans to hold a second public meeting with the project designer, Powder Horn Trail Companies, to review the draft feasibility study and to solicit input for the potential design of mountain-biking trails and park at Hill's Hill. This meeting is set for 6 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 2, via Zoom.

The day before, take a walk at Hill's Hill:

<<https://www.yourarlington.com/arlington-archives/residents/ideas-fun/174-recreation/20546-hills-071022>>

Bob Sprague

--

From: Cheryl Marceau <cherylmarceau.writer@gmail.com>
To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 07/31/2022 04:28 PM
Subject: Hill's Hill Mountain Bike Park Proposal and Alternative Recommendation

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Dear Mr. Connelly,

I am registered to attend the hearing on Tuesday, August 2, but I have a potential schedule conflict and may not be able to attend.

Please enter my comments below into the public record:

Arlington is significantly developed, with very little open space and much of that lacking in mature trees and other vegetation. In light of our current climate crisis, all unpaved open space is valuable, and all open space with a tree canopy is absolutely crucial to our future. Mature trees are responsible for significant carbon sequestration, something we desperately need to maintain and increase.

There are already cleared trails on Hill's Hill which could be used for mountain biking as well as for walking. Mixed uses such as these are not incompatible, and in fact, I frequently hike in state parks and various town conservation lands which allow mountain biking on most if not all trails. Whipple Hill, less than 2 miles from Hill's Hill, has several miles of trails which are open to mountain biking.

Installing pump tracks would require deforesting Hill's Hill – removing mature carbon-sequestering trees for the purposes of construction. Even if some trees were replanted, the delicate ecosystem of native plants and other wildlife would be destroyed, probably forever.

If the town makes a decision that we must have a pump track, then I strongly urge our Parks and Recreation Department, as well as our Open Space Committee, to redirect the pump track plan to already-cleared land such as the Stratton School playground on Mountain Avenue.

Pump tracks cost anywhere from \$30,000 to \$250,000 to build. Maintenance is not free. Insurance for such a facility would also not be free.

With a huge tax override looming, Arlington can't afford one of everything that might be on our wish list. A pump track is an unnecessary expense. Some people will like it, most people won't use it, and it will divert money from other park maintenance requirements in future years. Let's open up Hill's Hill existing trails to mountain biking and not build a pump track.

My ALTERNATIVE RECOMMENDATION:

Single-use water bottles will be banned in Arlington soon. Parents of kids in school and other recreation programs are understandably concerned about how their children will stay hydrated while playing sports at Arlington fields.

Instead of spending money on a pump track which would be of limited or no value to the vast majority of our population, I propose the money be used instead to buy and install water bottle filling stations at all Arlington parks.

We need more water fountains at all the parks, and we need to maintain those.

For the cost to construct a dirt pump track, we could install 10-15 water bottle filling stations at parks around town. For the cost to construct an asphalt pump track, we could have multiple filling stations at all of the parks, and maintain them. I have not conducted a survey to know how many water fountains we currently have (and how many are broken), but surely 15 water bottle stations would go a long way to meeting the real and present needs of all adults and children in Arlington, no matter what their recreational activities.

Sincerely,
Cheryl Marceau

From: Cassandra Chamallas <cchamallas@gmail.com>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 07/31/2022 08:43 PM
Subject: Hill's Hill Eco-track

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As a lifelong resident of Arlington who grew up only a few blocks from Hill's Hill, bike riding throughout the Turkey Hill area I urge you to support the Eco-track option for this property. As devastating climate change impacts communities around the globe including our own we need to preserve *every* tree possible.

Best,
Cassandra Chamallas
Candia St, Arlington

From: Charles Chamallas <chuckchamallas@gmail.com>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 07/31/2022 09:00 PM
Subject: Eco-Track Option for Hill's Hill Woods

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> Joe, I am a towny born in Arlington went through the school system as well as growing up on Candia Street. My parents brought me to Hill's Hill for walks and picnics. I was Fortunate enough to buy a home ion Candia Street and I brought my two daughters to Hills Hills and then to the "new" park, soccer fields I strongly support the eco-track option. Charles Chamallas 41 Candia Street

Sent from my iPhone

From: Lynne Chamallas <lchamallas@gmail.com>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 08/01/2022 01:42 AM
Subject: Eco-track

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Hi,
My husband and I are residents in the area of Hills Hills. We both support the Eco-Track option.
Thank you,
Charles & Lynne Chamallas

Sent from my iPhone

From: Diane Krause <samburu@comcast.net>
To: JConnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 07/31/2022 12:14 PM
Subject: Mountain Bike Proposal for Hill's Hill

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Mr. Connelly,

I am a homeowner in Arlington and I am writing to you about the mountain bike proposal for Hill's Hill.

I am OPPOSED to the proposed pump track in the meadow.

Please get a proposal that moves the pump track to the flat mowed area behind the soccer field at the base of Hill's Hill, with easy access to the bike trail. I assume it will be cheaper and easier to build in this location. Or move the pump track to one of the many mowed fields in Arlington that have little benefit to wildlife.

On the Parks & Recreation Commission page on the Arlington website it states:

"Arlington's natural environment is a precious and limited resource that has been difficult to acquire and maintain, and it needs to be protected ardently."

In my opinion the proposed pump track location violates this mission statement. Protecting the natural environment does not mean constructing a large man-made structure in the middle of the meadow. It does not mean the destruction of trees and plants in order to build that structure. It means protecting what is there now.

Please continue to PRESERVE the Oak and Hickory forest at Hill's Hill.

I SUPPORT mountain bike trails at Hill's Hill, assuming they can be done in an ecological way. I SUPPORT young riders being outside and enjoying nature. They will be the future stewards of our natural world. In my experience mountain bike riders care about the environment. I believe they would welcome a more environmentally-sensitive solution. A pump track is a completely different riding experience than on a trail so why can't it be located somewhere else? I hope there can be an open dialog and solution that satisfies everyone.

Henry Fenollosa in the 2/23/21 P&R meeting minutes talks about spending as much

time building trails as riding on them. That he enjoyed the creative aspect and that "the building aspect is just as, if not more important than riding." Do most mountain bikers feel this way? Can we address this by taking the area near the bike path as a place for riders to create jumps, etc.? At the end of a season fill it in and smooth out the area and let them start all over again--fostering creativity and community and recycling the space. --And you don't have to destroy the meadow and trees in order to do so.

Mr. Connelly, in the minutes from the 2/23/21 P&R meeting you stated, in part, that Hill's Hill is a perfect location because "it isn't being used". Hill's Hill is one of the few parks in Arlington that has a wooded area. And it is being used by walkers, bikers, dog walkers and people enjoying a small piece of nature.-- Not to mention the birds and pollinators and mammals that live there.

Arlington doesn't have the luxury of a large natural area like the Middlesex Fells. We need to preserve the limited wooded areas that we have. Many different types of people are using our relatively small parks. Carefully designing mountain bike trails at Hill's Hill and moving the pump track can be a win-win for mountain bikers and people who want to protect our open spaces.

Thank you.

Diane Krause

From: Tom <mccaughtry@gmail.com>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 07/31/2022 09:55 AM
Subject: Hill's Hill

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Hi Joe,

We wanted to voice our support for the Eco-track option so that the natural woods habitat is maintained. It is the best option to meet both conservation and recreational visions the community closest to Hill's Hill is looking for. We are also happy to actively help with the Eco-track design and maintenance.

Thank you,
Tom & Heather

Attachments:

File: [image0.jpeg](#) Size: 1395k Content Type: image/jpeg

From: Shovon <shovonashraf@gmail.com>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Cc: Shovon Ashraf <shovonashraf@gmail.com>
Date: 07/29/2022 09:58 AM
Subject: Hills Hill Mountain Biking Feasibility Study - Written Comments

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Good morning, Mr. Connelly,

Thank you for your letter about the Hills Hill Mountain Biking Feasibility Study, for which you have requested written comments. I, on behalf of the 50-52 Condo association at Washington St, Arlington, MA, am writing to request that no biking trail be created adjacent to the "Summer Hill Cir" driveway, as our two condos have direct views and are only a few feet away from the conservation land with the forest and next to Summer Hill Cir.

We ask that any biking trail be created on the other side - the "Summer Street" side instead.

Last year when a temporary mountain biking trail was created, the afternoons and evenings were incredibly loud with bikers on the trail - the noise was disruptive to our work and comfort as they were only a few feet away from our rooms where we have been working remotely since March 2020. We still work remotely from home and also work during the weekend. Regardless of whether we work from home on a given day, to ensure that we have privacy and reasonable control of noise, we urge you to **not have the trail on the side of our condos - adjacent to Summer Hill Cir.**

We would highly appreciate your consideration, as we the residents at the two condos would be directly and adversely impacted if a trail was created on the side of "Summer Hill Cir."

We appreciate your consideration and hope that you would understand our concern and support our opposition.

Best regards,
Shovon Ashraf

On behalf of 50-52 Condo Association
50-52 Washington St
Arlington, MA 02474

From: Will Morgan <wgmorgan@gmail.com>
To: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 07/07/2022 08:50 PM
Subject: Hill's Hill mountain biking trail

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Hello, my wife and I just moved to Arlington two months ago and I am thrilled to hear that the town is considering building a mountain biking trail at Hill's Hill. I am an avid mountain biker and would love to see this come to fruition.

Thanks.

Will Morgan
189 Spring Street

From: Chris Lull <chris_18@verizon.net>
To: "jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us" <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: Diane Krause <samburu3@gmail.com>
Date: 07/24/2022 04:52 PM
Subject: Fw: [arlington] Balancing Recreation & Nature in Arlington

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Hello Mr. Connelly!

I was really interested to see this proposal for a mountain bike area at Hill's Hill. I'm long past the age of wanting to actually ride on it, but in general think this is a good plan for a much underutilized piece of land in Arlington. Before my dog died, I often brought her to Hill's Hill field and woods, where she thoroughly enjoyed running around and chasing rabbits (before 9AM, of course!). I rarely saw anyone else in the wooded area, and was surprised at how little it was used, although the existing trail from Washington/Summer had clearly seen some use.

Random thoughts:

- Great access from the Minuteman Bikeway
- Plenty of parking at Rec Center, though with some overlap with hockey season.
- The proposed trail along the Summer St embankment would be challenging to build, I think. Steep and filled with large chunks of rock, not to mention lots of poison ivy. Maybe instead, widen the margins of the field? This would have the additional advantage of making ambulance access easier!
- Police/ambulance call box? Or just assume everyone has a cell phone.
- I do think the meadow at Hill's Hill is pretty, but hardly unique.
- I like that some young users are interested in helping to develop the jumps etc., but I feel strongly that some adults with experience should make any final decisions.
- Isn't this the area from which a coyote appeared in someone's back yard and bit a child? Increased use by people may encourage coyotes to seek other refuges.

Just my two cents!

Chris Lull

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Diane <samburu3@gmail.com>
To: Arlington List <arlington@arlingtonlist.org>
Sent: Sunday, July 24, 2022 at 02:47:40 PM EDT
Subject: [arlington] Balancing Recreation & Nature in Arlington

On Tuesday, 8/2 Parks & Rec is having a zoom call open to the public about their Mountain Bike plans for Hill's Hill. The link for the proposal is: View the presentation from the first public input session September 23, 2021 <<https://www.arlingtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/58484/637707560346930000>> , page 8 & 9 show a picture of a pump track and a map of the proposal, with a pump track replacing the existing meadow. I have serious concerns

about the impact of the pump track component—a large, built structure that would harm the recovery of natural habitat on Hill's Hill.

Getting kids & adults outdoors and offering them a new recreation opportunity is important.* But can we make this a BOTH-AND? Can we combine recreation with preservation of the limited wooded space we have in Arlington? Can we create the region's first Eco-Trak?

Can we design trails that are more eco friendly? Include education and nature restoration and maintenance in the experience?

Can we modify the existing design to preserve the meadow and wooded area by moving the pump track to an existing mowed field?

I'm guessing not many teens and preteens read the Arlington List (their loss), so I encourage parents to bring them into the conversation. This is a real-time issue where their voices should be heard. I read how one teen enjoyed the creativity and time of building jumps as much, if not more than, the actual riding. So do we have a dedicated area where jumps are designed and then removed and then redesigned by the riders, in effect recycling the space and adding creativity and community to the experience?

Knowing that Arlington has a limited amount of open space, how do we want to use it, and maybe come up with some new ways to educate and preserve, while recreating? I send this email in the hopes of big picture thinking and planning, hoping mountain bikers and those who prioritize nature can come together for solutions.

Attend the meeting on 8/2 @ 6pm, by registering at: <https://town-arlington-ma.us.zoom.us/join/join?pwd=Zm5kdW9jbnRpeU6-8W-5Gy7Et9DIs> or send comments to: jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us

Thanks,
Diane Krause

* Note: biking is allowed on all existing multi-use trails under P&R jurisdiction in Arlington, but altering trails is not allowed without permission. This P&R project will have a pump track and trails with jumps & turns.

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To post a message to the list, send it to arlington@arlingtonlist.org
Search the archives: <https://www.arlingtonlist.org/archives/search>
To subscribe or unsubscribe, visit <https://www.arlingtonlist.org/subscribe/>
Questions? <https://www.arlingtonlist.org/faq/>
Email the list manager at arlington-owner@arlingtonlist.org
Please help keep the list organized by tagging your message see <https://arlingtonlist.org/rules/keywords> for details

From: Martha Rogers <martharogersmusic@gmail.com>
To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 07/27/2022 10:44 AM
Subject: Recreation on Hill's Hill

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Hi Joe,

I write with thoughts regarding the Park and Recreation Commission's current evaluation of a pump track project on Hill's Hill near Burns Ice Rink. Please forward this email to other members of the Commission.

At first glance the project appears to pose a conflict between environmental stewardship and youth recreation. However a small team of people removing invasive plants in the area is offering some other ways to view the situation.

As I imagine you know, Hill's Hill itself is a hidden woodland jewel where native plants are gradually regaining ground after this determined team has pulled out many invasive plants in the area. As one of the team removing invasives, I was thrilled to see two tiny oak trees with their over-sized sun-thirsty leaves come into view from among the tangle of invasive plants.

Also as you are aware, on Hill's Hill mountain bikers occasionally dash across its tiny meadow and small oasis of wildlife, exactly where the pump track is proposed for construction.

I am excited that a pump track offers a healthy, exciting challenge for young people. At the same time, its construction and frequent use would threaten the fragile returning vegetation at the currently proposed location. So how can we have it all? How can Arlington preserve Hill's Hill as one of our few woodland areas, engage our young people in environmental restoration/education/maintenance, and also support the pump track?

The team of invasive weed-pullers is proposing an Eco-trak on Hill's Hill where bikers can ride but also participate in maintaining and restoring the area in which they ride. This innovative concept linking recreation with engagement in the natural area supporting that activity is a clear win for future generations who are inheriting an earth in great peril. Nature's smallest classrooms hold big learning opportunities.

The second part of the solution is finding a location for the pump track that will be accessible and well-suited to the construction that it requires. The small meadow on Hill's Hill is barely enough space for a pump track without removing further vegetation, and it is not even a level surface. A pump track can be built above ground. Where is a mowed field in town that is suitable for design and construction with youth involvement and without imperiling Arlington's small remaining green spaces?

I advocate for a win-win for both of these creative proposals. A pump track and an eco-trak are not either/or. They are both/and. Each engages youth in life-affirming activities. Stakeholders for both proposals can model inclusion and civil discourse over the coming months and also engage our youth in the process. We need everyone's voice in these exchanges as they unfold. We can all speak, write, and reflect together. With creative open dialogue we can find solutions that uplift all of us.

Respectfully,
Martha Rogers
Rockaway Lane
Arlington, MA

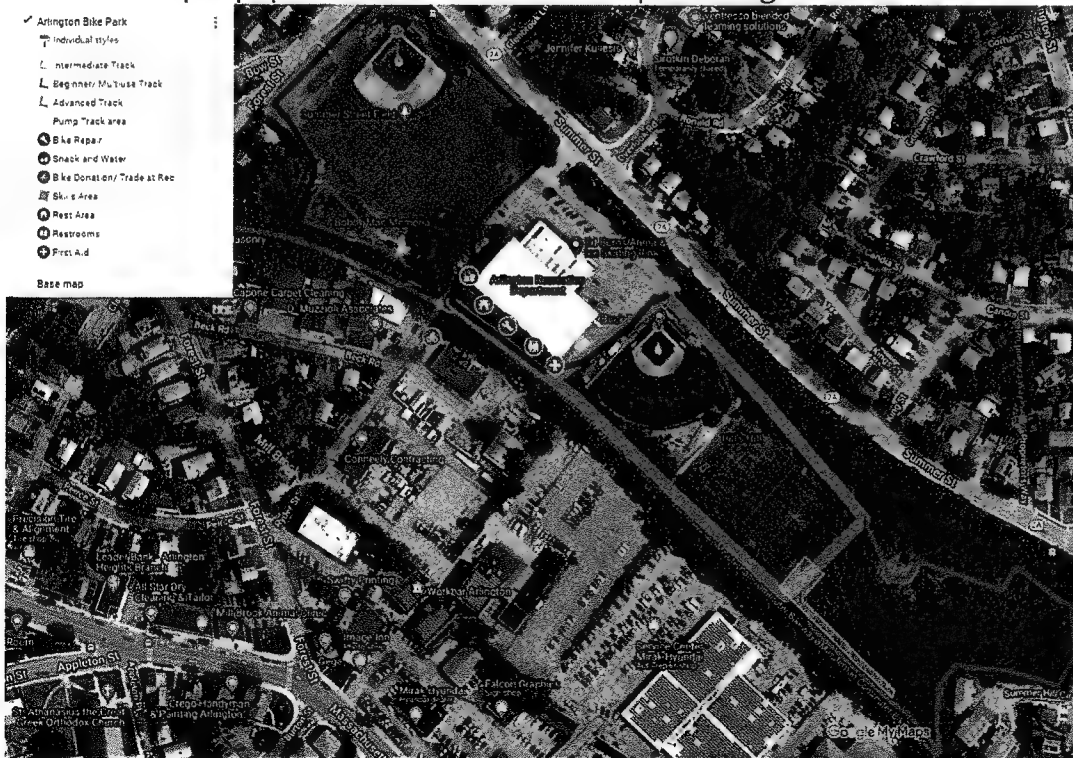
From: Johanna Meyer <meyer.jwm@gmail.com>
To: "Connelly, Joe" <JConnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>, Charlotte Milan <cmilan@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 07/27/2022 09:43 AM
Subject: More feedback on the Arlington Bike Park

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Joe and Charlotte,

Here are a few more ideas about the Bike Park-
 Keep and enhanced the natural areas, improve and expose the perimeters to reduce untoward behaviors and engage a larger audience. Make the Rec Center a go to location in the summer for kids too. (Is the ice rink open in the summer for indoor soccer? Possibly use for tricycles or push bikes in the ice rink?)
 Bike donation and trade center at the Recycle center?
 Rest Area- snacks, water, first aid, bike repair areas at the back of the Rec Center
 Skills area in the underutilized bocci courts area
 Move the pump park down where is exposed again to dissuade untoward gatherings



<https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=1qF06IYAb3K0q1p8ig4PHGSSjrxeoajE&usp=sharing>

Just hoping! What a fun place!

From: Elaine Crowder <ecrowder@communication-exchange.com>
To: Joe Connelly <JConnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: Brian McBride <brianmcb@outlook.com>
Date: 07/26/2022 05:37 PM
Subject: Hill's Hill Evening Stroll | Wed 7/27, Mon 8/1 @6:30pm (Pk&Rec public)

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(with telephone # removed for public display as letter to the Commission)
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Dear Director Joe Connelly and the Park & Recreation Commission,

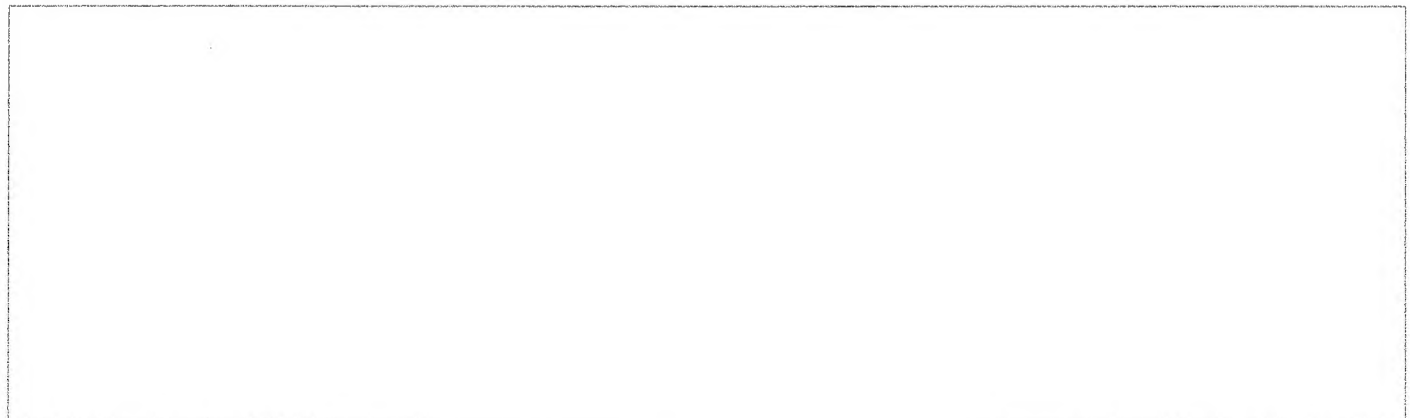
We wanted to send a personal invite to this evening stroll through Hill's Hill. A group of us have been brainstorming a recreation AND open space solution at Hill's Hill that we hope might satisfy the Park and Recreation Commission's charge of addressing the ongoing need to improve parks, playgrounds, *and* open spaces. We are looking forward to discussing concepts that could make this site a model for recreation and open space renewal.

Sincerely,

Elaine Crowder
TMM Pct 19
Arlington MA Invasives ArMI

Brian McBride
Open Space Committee
=====

Hill's Hill



Hill's Hill Evening Stroll: A Story of Woodlands Renewal
Wed 7/27 & 8/1 6:30 pm - Meet at Buck Field/Hill's Hill sign at left end of the rink lot
Flyer with Photos

What's remarkable about the ecosystem gracing the top of Hill's Hill is ... nearly everywhere you look you see a native plant. Elsewhere, say along the base of this woodland nearest the Minuteman Bikeway, invasives abound.

But here things look refreshingly healthy. Signs exist of a return to the original oak-hickory forest.

Come enjoy the waning light as it strikes this woodland in renewal. Take note of transitions from open meadow to early succession woodlands. Tour the many native plants from a blackberry patch to sumac stands. Resilient black oaks range in size from seedlings to young trees, providing shade for still green, shade-loving sedge grasses. Best of all, several big tooth aspen have staked out a spot at grass's edge, anticipating taking their eventual place in the upper canopy as more shade-tolerant trees grow below.

This woodland is recovering, whether we humans notice or not.

Invitation flyer pdf to print and share!

https://drive.google.com/file/d/10SNeBw15SMSXrJ3eI_j7_ajnuAZ6FWbV/view?usp=sharing

Photo: (c) Elaine Crowder, Montage of four native species rimming Hill's Hill meadow:
Blackberry, Staghorn Sumac, Bigtooth Aspen, Black Oak

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Elaine Crowder, Ph. D.

TMM Pct 19

Arlington MA Invasives ArMI

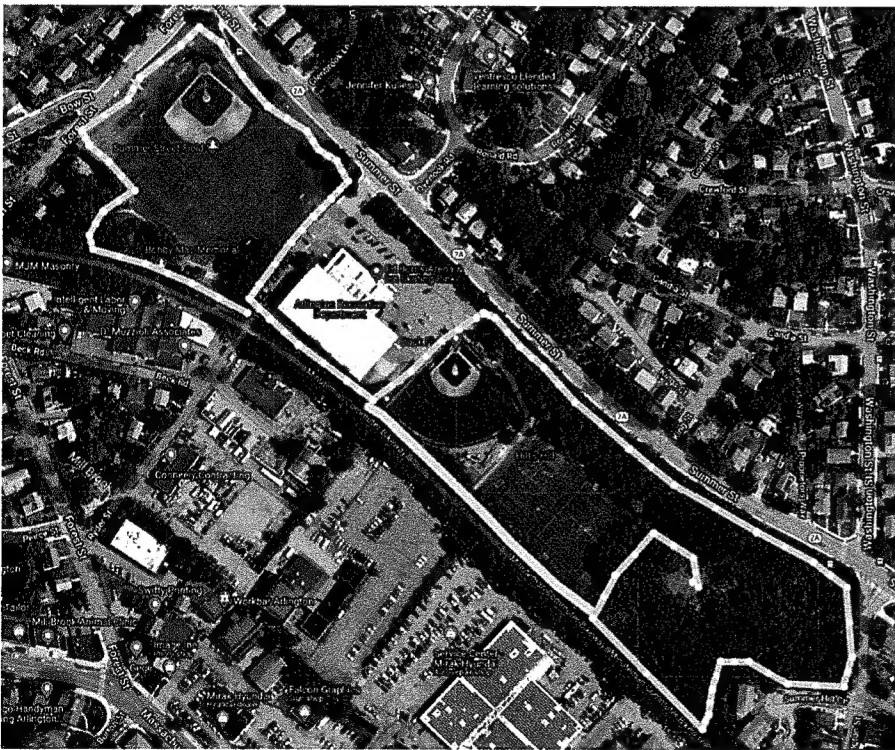
From: Johanna Meyer <meyer.jwm@gmail.com>
To: "Connelly, Joe" <JConnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 07/14/2022 09:47 AM
Subject: Hill's hill Bike park

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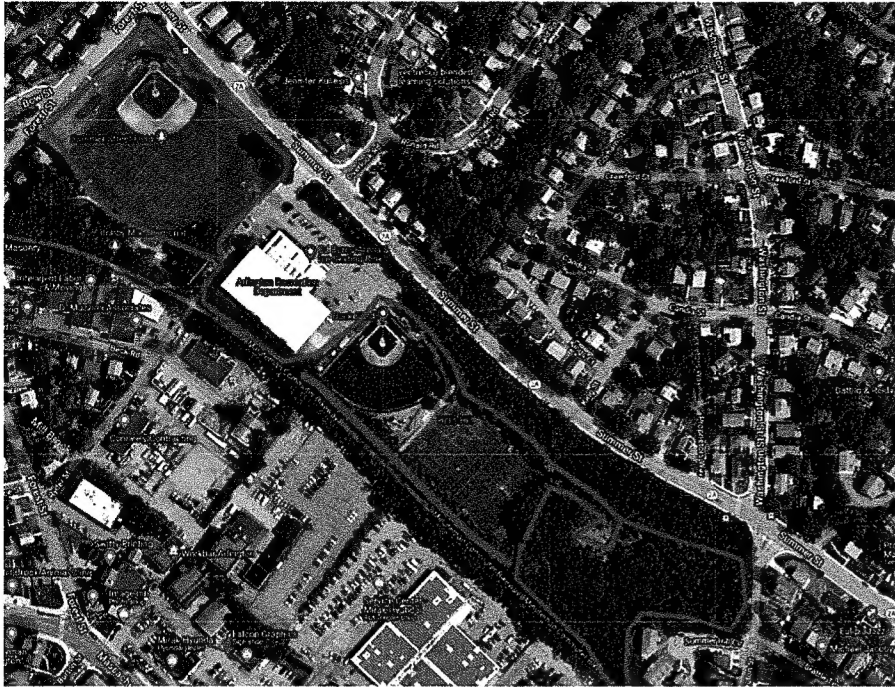
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Hi Joe,

In an effort to use our current park land more efficiently and leave as much conservation space as possible. Could we consider a trail like this for biking? Thanks for considering it Johanna



-or something like this



Johanna Meyer
781-312-8802